

ANNUAL REPORT

TO

THE MEMBERS OF

SHORT HEATH

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,

BY

JOHN T. HARTILL,

L.R.C.P.L., M.R.C.S. Eng., J.P.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

January 18th, 1909.

**Summary of Vital and Mortal Statistics
for 1908.**

Area... 1,063 acres.

Population :—

Census, 1901 3,531

Estimated, 1908 3,956

Number of Inhabited Houses :—

Census, 1901 722

Estimated, 1908 819

Average Number of Persons per House 4·8

Density 3·7 per acre.

Births 152

Birth-rate 38·4

Deaths 56

Death-rate 14·1

Zymotic Death-rate 1·0

Infantile Mortality per 1,000 Births registered ... 138·1

Medical Officer's Annual Report,

1908.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

In this my 38th Annual Report, I am pleased to be able to state that the health of the people as a whole during 1908 was fairly favourable, notwithstanding a considerable prevalence of Infectious Diseases, chiefly mild in type.

The District is high and bracing, with high, open country all round; and the general fall of the land is gradual towards the South East. For practical purposes, it may be said to consist of five villages, inhabited by locksmiths, miners, and in a smaller degree by tillers of the soil. The Miners work in the adjacent Cannock Rural District, and had fairly constant occupation. The surviving small master Lock and Key Smiths who make locks and keys by hand alone were probably nearer extinction than ever before, so depressed was trade throughout the year. The use in recent years of gas engines to the production of locks and keys has undoubtedly improved the position of those who have been able to secure them. A part of the District was supplied last year with electric mains. If the smaller masters will think and inquire how small electric motors can be adapted to their trades, and the Council can get the electric mains extended, I am convinced they may improve their physical well-being, and at very small cost to themselves.

The Birth and Death Rates calculated on a population of 3956, were respectively 38·4 and 14·1 per thousand per year. The averages in the ten preceding years were respectively 38·1 and 14·9—that is to say the death rate in eleven consecutive years averaged considerably less than half what it was in the year I became M. O. H. for the District. The Death Rate from preventable diseases was 1·0, as compared with an average of 1·8 in the ten preceding years. Six deaths

of persons from Short Heath occurred in public institutions beyond the District, of which five were in the Union House—the largest number by far, recorded in any year but one since 1898. Including these, the net deaths belonging to the District give a Death Rate of 15·6 per thousand, as compared with an average of 15·5 in the ten preceding years. The population was obtained by adding 31 newly-built houses to 805 in the District when the year began, and deducting 2 demolished during the year ; thus showing 834 houses at the end of the year. Of these, 10 which are new are not yet fit for occupation, and 5 which have not been habitable for some time have been put into tenantable repair, but have not yet been re-occupied. Taking therefore the number of houses at the middle of the year as 819, and multiplying this by 4·8, which was the average number of persons per house at the last two Censuses, and adding on 25 residents in the Union House, the resulting population fairly corresponds with the house to house inspection records. There are no Common Lodging Houses in the District ; but there are 93 persons who are either domestic servants or persons in lodgings.

The deaths of children under a year old per 1000 births registered were 138·1, as compared with an average of 145·7 in the ten preceding years. Five of these children were either prematurely born, or born weaklings. By reference to Table 5 it will be seen, that whilst the deaths of infants under a year old legitimately born were about 13 per cent. of the total registered, the deaths amongst those not born in lawful wedlock exceeded 33 per cent.

The Notification of Births Act 1907 has not been adopted by the Council. It is an Act designed to decrease infantile mortality, if satisfactorily administered ; but, there will be no use in adopting it, unless the Council can secure the services of trained female health visitors, supplemented by voluntary effort.

Ten cases of Scarlet Fever and four of Erysipelas were certified. Of other Contagious or Infectious Diseases there came to my knowledge—Measles, 14 ; Diarrhoea, 5 ; Whooping Cough, 61 ; Chicken Pox, 25 ; Mumps, 38 ; and Influenza, 5. Of these, three died from Whooping Cough and one from Diarrhoea. A very satisfactory

feature of the year's history is the complete absence of Typhoid Fever and Diphtheria.

The cases of Scarlet Fever were all mild in type and chiefly occurred in the last three months of the year. All possible efforts were made to secure isolation as satisfactory as could be obtained, having regard to the facts that no Isolation Hospital has been provided, and that most of the houses in the District cannot be used satisfactorily for the purposes of isolation.

The cases of Whooping Cough chiefly occurred in May and June. Many of them were severe, and placed the lives of the sufferers in danger. Advice was given in each case as to the best means at our disposal to check the spread of the disease. Fortunately the period of the year was in favour of recovery ; and considering the severity of the cases, it is to this cause, more than any other, that I attribute the comparatively light mortality.

The remaining cases of Infectious Disease considerably interfered with attendance at school ; but there is only one point on which further comment is necessary. So far as the year 1908 is concerned, no harm has resulted in Short Heath—but to prevent possible or probable harm this year, I appeal to the Schoolmasters of the District through the Council, to loyally accept the advice tendered by the Officers of the Local Sanitary Authority, the *paramount* Authority in sanitary matters, subject to the control of the Local Government Board, with regard to measures to be adopted to prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

In January 1908 the Education Committee of the County Council issued regulations for the guidance of Managers and Teachers under their control. The Education Authority for Short Heath is the County Council—but it has been distinctly laid down that the Act which brought about the Medical Inspection of school children “does not confer powers in supersession of those heretofore exercised generally in a public health sense by Sanitary Authorities under previous enactments,” and that “rather it is supplementary to existing Public Health Law.” As in my opinion section 2 of Rule 46,—which relates to Measles and Whooping Cough, the two most fatal

diseases to children of school age,—is absolutely inconsistent with section 3 of the same rule and the foot-note thereto, and is liable to be and has been seriously misinterpreted ; and, as in its present form I consider the rule unworkable, I propose to discuss the matter fully in my Annual Report to the Willenhall Council, where the subject has come up in an acute form, and to endeavour to get the Rule amended or withdrawn.

The Death Rate from Pulmonary Consumption was 1·0 per thousand per year, and from all forms of Consumption 2·0 per thousand per year. On January 1st, 1909, the "Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations 1908" came into force in the District. These Regulations provide at the expense of the Council for the notification to the M. O. H. of cases of Pulmonary Consumption amongst the inmates of Poor Law Institutions, or amongst persons under the care of (Poor Law) District Medical Officers ; and it will be the duty of the M. O. H. to consider—within certain limits—whether anything can be done to prevent other persons catching the complaint—Pulmonary Consumption having been clearly proved to be an infectious disease.

The house at the Sandbeds, belonging to Mrs. Whitehead described by me in August as barely fit to live in, has been very much improved, and it is hoped that the cause of the trouble has been permanently removed.

The Sanitary Inspector, acting under my supervision, inspected every house in the District. There are 834 houses, including 15 described in my last Annual Report as not fit for habitation. These have been repaired to the satisfaction of the Surveyor, and some of them are again occupied. There were 2022 bed-rooms, 540 sanitary conveniences, and 404 ash-pits—of which 297 were water-tight and 107 open. These figures point to improvement over conditions previously existing—but all open ash-pits are a nuisance from time to time, and should be covered over and properly ventilated as soon as practicable. The sanitary conveniences are chiefly privy cess-pits ; and excrement and house refuse were satisfactorily removed by contract. The ash-pits and sanitary conveniences were kept in fair

order—but I hope within the next few years most of the cess-pits will be replaced by water closets. The bakehouses, slaughterhouses, dairies, cowsheds and milk-shops were regularly inspected and were kept in fair order. The water is almost entirely supplied by the Wolverhampton Corporation, and no complaints have been received of insufficiency. The milk supply is almost exclusively obtained from local farmers. From Table 6, the Council will see that a large amount of useful work was done, and that all the outstanding Notices, both Formal and Informal, 31 in number at the end of 1907 were complied with in 1908. It is anticipated that all Formal and Informal Notices not complied with at the end of the year, will be early this year.

During the year I inspected 6 Factories and 30 Workshops, and requested that 24 of these might be limewashed by a specified date, continuing my aim to get every shop limewashed once a year at least. The Sanitary Inspector subsequently visited each of these, and he reports that in every case my verbal request had been complied with. The attention of the Sanitary Inspector was called to two nuisances near Workshops from defective sanitary accommodation, to two nuisances arising from defective drainage, to one case in which birds were improperly kept, and to one case in which pigs were kept too near to a workshop in contravention of the bye-laws. Formal Notice has been served to secure abatement of nuisance near Mr. Walker's factory, Lane Head, which has not yet been complied with ; whilst the pigs are no longer a nuisance, because the workshop is not at present occupied. The other nuisances have been abated ; and propositions have been made intended to secure increased sanitary accommodation at an early date at a Lane Head Factory, and improved sanitary surroundings to a Workshop in the Back Lane. Mr. Duncomb's Factory in Hunt's Lane needs in my opinion careful examination, to determine whether it is or is not structurally safe. There was no overcrowding in Workshops ; the Factory Abstract was posted up in every case in which the law requires it. Nothing was notified by or to H.M. Inspector of Factories. One out-worker's list was received (once only) and the addresses of 14 out-workers

were received from other Councils. All the work of out-workers is carried on in workshops on the Register, and all the shops are from time to time inspected. Section 22 of the Public Health Acts Amendments Act 1890 is in force in the District, and the standard of sanitary accommodation aimed at, is that suggested by the Home Office. Improved accommodation has been secured at Mr. Arthur Appleby's, since my last Annual Report was made. At the end of the year there were 10 factories and 53 workshops occupied, and 7 workshops void.

During the year, the sewers have been extended up Sneyd Lane, and along part of Poole's Lane, and the Cross Street sewer has been connected with the main Healey Street sewer. A sewerage plant has been laid down on the land bought in 1907, intended to deal with and purify the whole of the sewage of New Invention—which is the highest part of the District. It is situated between the main Wolverhampton Road and Pool Hayes Farm—well away from houses. The purification of the sewage is effected by bacterial organisms, whose vitality is developed in reception tanks and in the last 40 yards of the sewer mains. From the tanks it is ingeniously distributed automatically by means of a water-wheel over Powk-Hill stone to the depth of several feet, graded from $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch to $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch and placed over aerated tiles arranged at the base of the tank. I saw the plant in use a few weeks after the work was completed. When the previously partially clarified sewage was passed over the Powk-Hill stone it had a strong offensive odour; but after filtration over the stone, a sample of the effluent was taken in my presence and found to be odourless and as clear as tap water. Upon making a rough examination of the effluent with Nessler's re-agent, I came to the conclusion that in the early seventies, 3 out of every 5 persons in New Invention often drank a more polluted water. Your Inspector informs me that the system continues to work satisfactorily.

Another acre of land has been bought, near to Clarkes' Lane, with a view to dealing with the sewage of Short Heath Village, Lane Head and the Sandbeds on the same system, as soon as the Council is financially able to undertake the work.

There was no seizure of unwholesome food ; no sample of water was taken for analysis ; no action was taken under the Food and Drugs Act ; there is no Offensive Trade in the District.

The Water Supply to the school premises was satisfactory. Two of the existing schools are in a satisfactory condition. One I understand is about to cease being used as such, and a new school is being built at New Invention, and will shortly be fit for use.

I beg to remind the Council again, that after April 1st, 1910, no woman will be habitually allowed to attend women in child birth, except under the direction of a Doctor, unless certified under the Midwives Act, 1902. This Act is likely to have a most important bearing in Short Heath, and needs full consideration by the Council.

The births of 152 children were registered, of whom 146 were legitimate and 6 illegitimate. Twenty-one children died under a year old.

There were 74 cases of successful primary Vaccination ; 32 obtained Exemption Certificates ; 15 died without having been vaccinated ; and the vaccination of 1 was postponed. These figures seem to me to indicate a desire on the part of the parents to invite another visitation of Small-Pox.

All the deaths—with one exception—were certified by Doctor or Coroner.

The Tables required by the Local Government Board, County Council, and the Home Office, are in substance appended.

I am, Gentlemen,

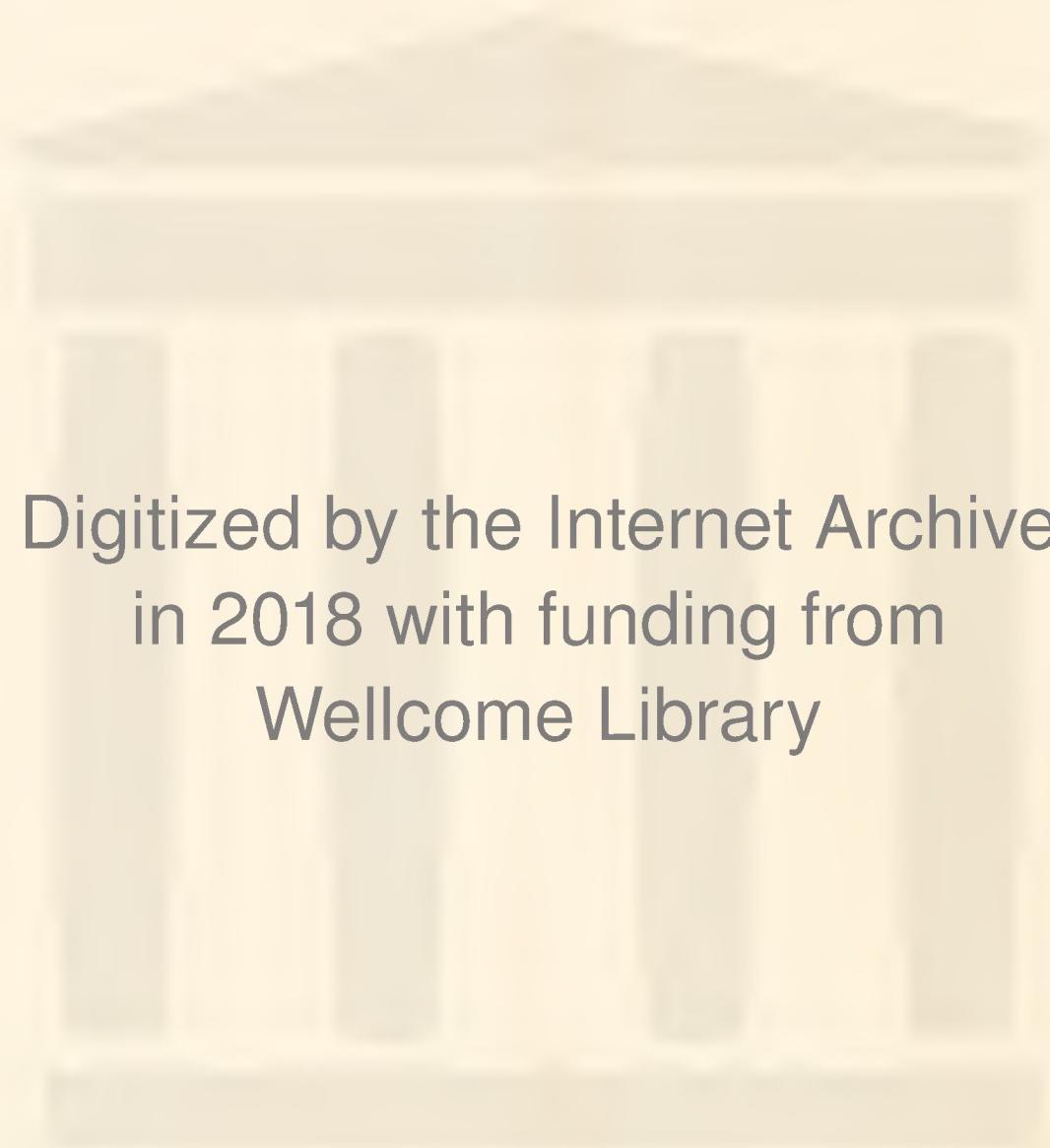
Yours obediently,

JOHN T. HARTILL,

M. O. H.

Willenhall,

January 18th, 1909.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b30085901>

Table I.

Year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.				Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Non-residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	Net Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.	
		Number	Rate*	Under 1 Year of Age	At all Ages.	Number	Rate.*				Number	Rate.*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1898	3531	156	44·1	29	185·8	54	15·2		0	54	15·2	
1899	3531	135	38·2	28	207·4	55	15·5		0	55	15·5	
1900	3531	130	36·8	15	115·3	72	20·3		0	72	20·3	
1901	3531	135	38·2	19	140·7	47	13·3		1	48	13·5	
1902	3610	162	44·8	21	129·6	44	12·1		2	46	12·7	
1903	3649	118	40·5	20	135·1	69	18·9		4	73	20·0	
1904	3749	141	37·6	14	99·2	41	10·9		3	44	11·7	
1905	3783	123	33·8	25	195·3	69	18·2		8	77	20·3	
1906	3808	134	35·1	17	126·8	47	12·3		3	50	13·1	
1907	3812	123	32·0	15	121·9	50	13·0		0	50	13·0	
Averages for years 1898-1907	3656	139	38·1	20	145·7	55	14·9	0	0	2	57	15·5
1908	3956	152	38·4	21	138·1	56	14·1	0	0	6	62	15·6

* Rates in Columns 4, 8, and 13 calculated per 1000 of estimated population.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water) } 1063

Total population at all ages 3531
Number of inhabited houses 722
Average number of persons per house 4·8 } At Census of 1901

NOTE.—Columns 9, 10, and 11.—There are no Public Institutions *in the District*. I have no information of any deaths except those *in* the District and those as given *in* the Union House, prior to 1901.

The Township of Short Heath now embraces the old Local Board District of Short Heath, plus part of Wednesfield old Local Board District.

By the term "Non-residents" is meant persons brought into the District on account of sickness or infirmity, and dying in public institutions there; and by the term "Residents" is meant persons who have been taken out of the District on account of sickness or infirmity, and have died in public institutions elsewhere.

Table 2.

LOCALITIES.

Not filled up, as there are no recognised divisions
of known population.

Table 3.

Cases of Infectious Disease certified during the year.

	At all Ages	At Ages—Years.					
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upw'ds
Scarlet Fever ...	10		2	8			
Erysipelas ...	4					4	
Totals ...	14	0	2	8	0	4	0

Other Cases of Infectious Disease which came to my knowledge.

	At all Ages	At Ages—Years.					
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upw'ds
Chicken Pox ...	25	1	4	20			
Diarrhoea ...	5		2	1		2	
Measles ...	14	2	5	7			
Whooping Cough	61	2	24	35			
Mumps ...	38		7	31			
Influenza ...	5					4	1
Totals ...	148	5	42	94	0	6	1

Table 4.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH.

Causes of Death.	Deaths in or belonging to whole District at subjoined Ages.							Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.
	All Ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and up- wards	
Small-pox								
Measles								
Scarlet Fever								
Whooping-cough			3	1	2			
Diphtheria and membranous croup }								
Croup }		1			1			
Fever { Typhus								
Enteric								
Other continued ...								
Epidemic Influenza ...								
Cholera								
Plague								
Diarrhoea		1			1			
Enteritis		1		1				
Puerperal Fever ...								
Erysipelas								
Other Septic Diseases ...								
Phthisis	4				1		3	
Other Tubercular Diseases ...	4	1		2	1			
Cancer, malignant disease ...	3						3	
Bronchitis	11		6				1	4
Pneumonia	4		2				1	1
Pleurisy								
Other Diseases of Respiratory Organs }								
Alcoholism }								
Cirrhosis of Liver }								
Venereal Diseases								
Premature Birth	2		2					
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition }	1						1	
Heart Diseases	4						1	3
Accidents	1			1				
Suicides								
Found drowned	1					1		
All other causes	21	8	2	1		3	7	
All causes	62	21	9	3	1	13	15	0

Table 5.
INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR.

CAUSE OF DEATH.		Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-2 Months.	2-3 Months.	3-4 Months.	4-5 Months.	5-6 Months.	6-7 Months.	7-8 Months.	8-9 Months.	9-10 Months.	10-11 Months.	11-12 Months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
ALL CAUSES.	Certified ...	2	0	1	4	7	4	3	1	1		2			1	1		20
	Uncertified ...								1									1
Common Infectious Diseases.	Small-pox ...																	
	Chicken-pox ...																	
	Measles ...																	
	Scarlet Fever ...																	
	Diphtheria : Croup ...																	
Diarrhoeal Diseases.	Whooping Cough ...																1	1
	Diarrhoea, all forms ...																	
	Enteritis (not Tuberculous) }																	
	Gastritis, Gastro-intestinal Catarrh }																	1
Wasting Diseases.	Premature Birth ...	2																
	Congenital Defects ...																	
	Injury at Birth ...																	
	Want of Breast-milk ...																	
	Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus }																	4
Tuberculous Diseases.	Tuberculous Meningitis ...																	
	Tuberculous Peritonitis: } Tabes Mesenterica }																	
	Other Tuberculous Diseases }																	1
	Erysipelas ...																	
	Syphilis ...																	
	Rickets ...																	
	Meningitis (not Tuberculous) }																	1
	Convulsions ...																	3
	Bronchitis ...		1															6
	Laryngitis ...																	
	Pneumonia ...																	2
	Suffocation, overlaying ...																	
	Other Causes ...																	
		2	0	1	4	7	4	3	1	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	21

Births in the year	Legitimate	... ...	146
	Illegitimate	... ...	6
Deaths in the year	Legitimate Infants	... ...	19
	Illegitimate Infants	... ...	2

TABLE 6.**SUMMARY OF WORK BY INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.**

Houses Inspected	...	...	...	...	...	...	834
Schools ,,,	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Workshops and Factories inspected, including Bakehouses...							37
Dairies inspected quarterly	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Cowsheds ,,, ,,,	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Slaughter-houses inspected quarterly	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Ashpits and Privies inspected	...	...	...	...	...	...	944
Pigsties inspected	...	...	...	...	...	...	89
Informal Notices to remedy foul conditions of houses and their appurtenances	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Informal Notices to remedy structural defects of Dwelling Houses and their appurtenances	...	...	...	...	...	...	53
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	53
Formal Notices to remedy structural defects in Dwelling Houses and their appurtenances	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Formal Notice to abate Overcrowding...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Abatement after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Informal Notices to abate overcrowding	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Formal Notices to abate nuisances from Ashpits and Privies							2
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Informal Notices to abate nuisances from Ashpits and Privies							21
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
Formal Notices to remedy faults in House Drainage						...	47
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	35
Informal Notices to remedy faults in House Drainage						...	95
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	88
Informal Notices to abate nuisances from Pigsties	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Abatements after Notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	2

(Continued.)

TABLE 6 (continued).

Table 7.

Abstract of Particulars asked for by Home Office.

Factories—Inspections	...	...	11	Written Notices	0
Workshops	,	...	57	,	0
Defects found :					
Want of Cleanliness	...	...	24	Remedied	...
*Defective Sanitary Accommodation			2	,	2
Insufficient ,,		,,	1	,	1
Other Nuisances	...	...	6	,	4
Homework :					
Lists received—1 Outworkers—5 in registered workshops.					
Addresses of Outworkers received from other Councils —14.					
Workshops on Register at end of 1908—60				Occupied—53.	
Chief Trades therein :					
Lock Manufacture	...	...	29		
Key ,,	...	...	18		
Bake-houses	...	...	2		
File-cutting	...	...	1		
Blacksmith	...	...	2		
Carpenter	...	...	1		
Factories in District	...	...	10		
Trades therein :					
Lock Manufacture	...	...	6		
Key ...	...	...	2		
Gas ...	...	..	1		
Stamping ...	...	...	1		

*Section 22 of the Public Health Acts Amendments Act, 1890, is in force in the District.

